



Department of Planning & Zoning Staff Report – Text Amendment Case No. 2026-3-ORD

**Introduced by Matthew Jewell
Parish President**

An ordinance to amend the St. Charles Parish Code of Ordinances, Appendix A. – St. Charles Parish Zoning Ordinance of 1981, Section III. – Definitions, adding a definition for Data Center, Section VI. – Zoning district criteria and regulations., D. Manufacturing and industry districts, adding Data Centers as permitted uses in the M-1 and M-2 zoning districts, and adding requirements for data centers to Section VII. – Supplemental use and performance regulations.

BACKGROUND

Data center development, particularly larger-scale facilities, is expanding across the country. With the infrastructure currently in place to accommodate existing large-scale industry, St. Charles Parish could be identified for the siting of new data center facilities.

Data Centers are not currently a specifically listed use in the Zoning Ordinance being an emerging industry. If a data center proposal was brought to St. Charles Parish, categorization of the use would default to the district descriptions, in this case classifying the use as “industrial.” To ensure clarity in the potential siting of these developments, this ordinance establishes Data Centers as a by-right use in M-1 Light Industrial where no primary on-site power is generated and in M-2 for all other instances.

The ordinance also establishes performance regulations for the specific use. It sets forth regulations specific to data centers, providing a path for the permitting of such facilities, and ensuring they are appropriately located and designed to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Parish residents and businesses.

POTENTIAL OUTCOMES

The Zoning Ordinance would be updated with the following:

- A definition for data centers
- Data Centers listed in the use regulations of industrial zoning districts (M-1, M-2)
- Performance regulations specific to data centers, with a focus on protecting homes, schools, daycares, assisted living facilities, and parks.

These changes will establish clear expectations for data center developments, guiding where they may be permitted and developed while ensuring they are not detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of St. Charles Parish residents and business.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Approval